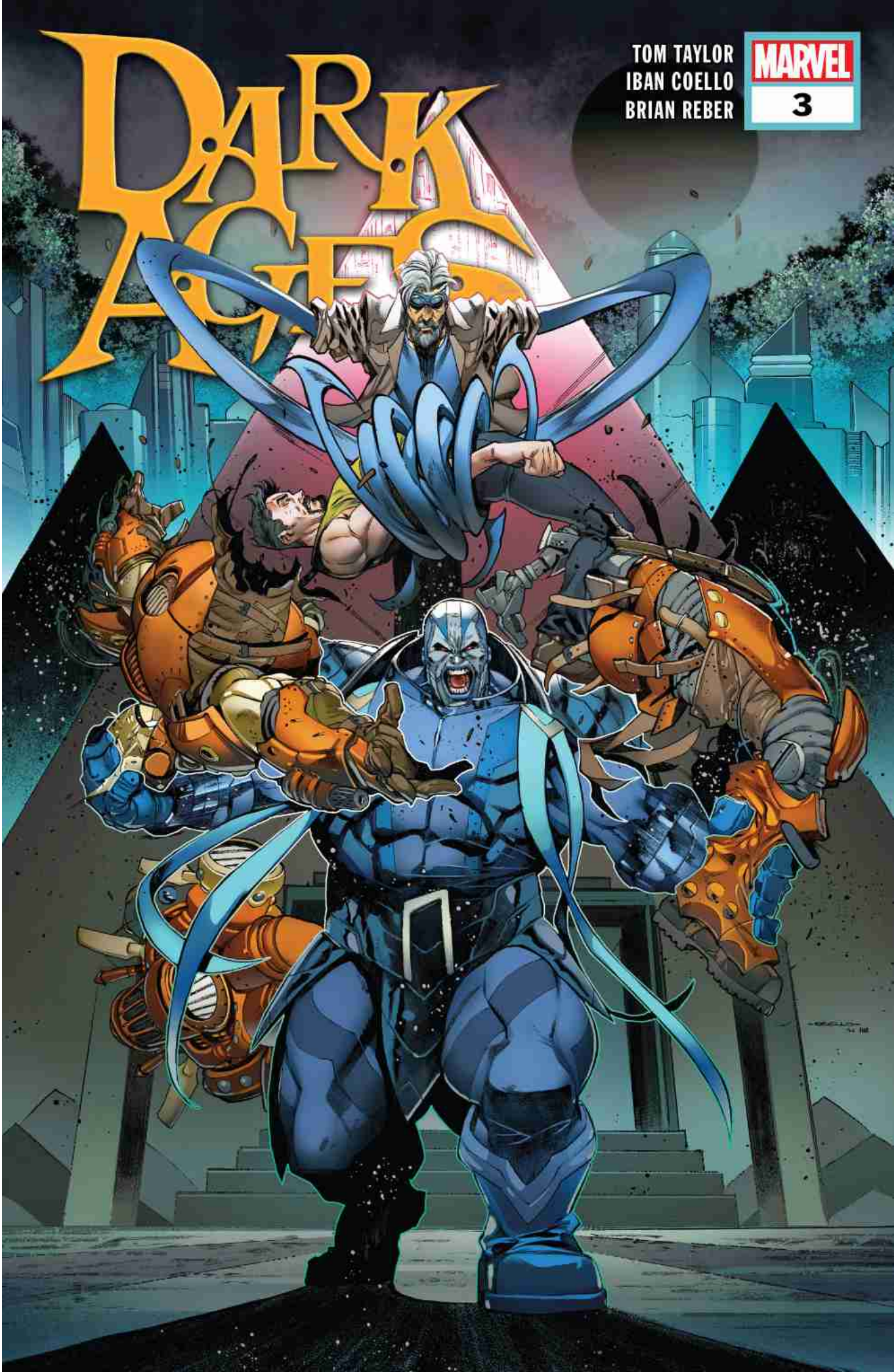
DARK AGES
TOM TAYLOR
IBAN COELLO
BRIAN REBER
MARVEL
3

A being of immense power called the Unmaker was sealed away inside the Earth. Billions of year later, the Unmaker awakened and began to destroy the planet from within. Earth's heroes sent a small strike force to combat the threat. When Dr. Strange released an E.M.P. wave to halt the Unmaker, all electricity on the planet was wiped out.

Now, seven years later, the survivors have formed new societies without the use of electricity. Many of Earth's heroes banded together and live in a series of protected outposts, connected by resident telepaths. But hostile forces prevailed elsewhere, and the mutant Apocalypse now rules Europe. When Tony Stark was abducted and brought to Apocalypse's stronghold, Apocalypse revealed that he had managed to fuel a limited supply of electricity using the captive Magneto. The Purple Man then used his mind control powers to force Tony into Apocalypse's service alongside other captive heroes, all to further Apocalypse's ultimate goal: to reawaken the Unmaker once more!

DARK AGES

writer • TOM TAYLOR
artist • IBAN COELLO
color artist • BRIAN REBER
letterer • VC's JOE SABINO

cover artists • IBAN COELLO & FRANK D'ARMATA
variant cover artists • LOGAN LUBERA & RACHELLE ROSENBERG; RYAN STEGMAN, JP MAYER & JASON KEITH; TAKASHI OKAZAKI & RICO RENZI

designer • CARLOS LAO
assistant editor • MARTIN BIRO
associate editor • ANNALISE BISSA
editor • TOM BREVOORT
editor in chief • C.B. CEBULSKI

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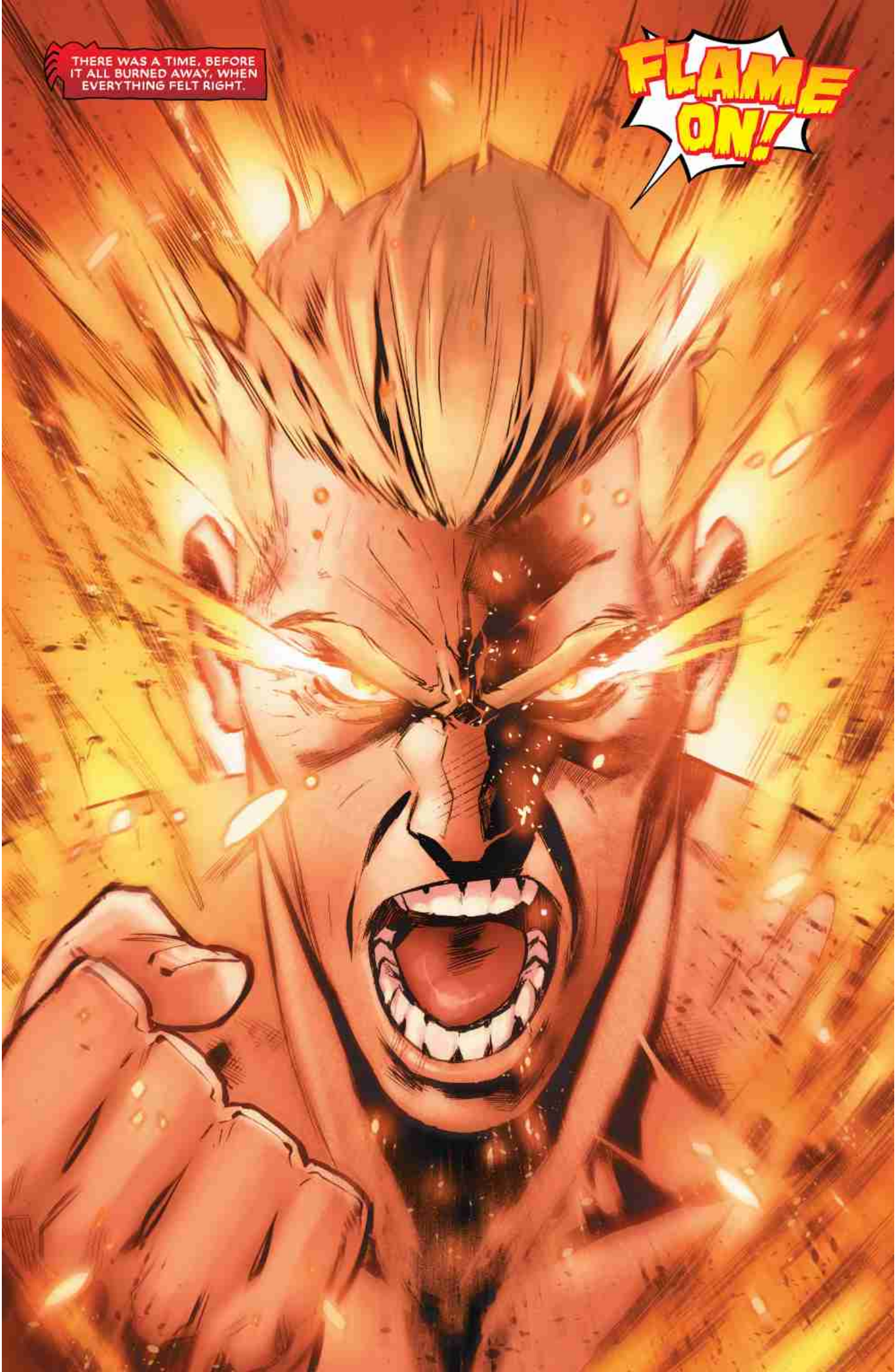

THERE WAS A TIME, BEFORE IT ALL BURNED AWAY, WHEN EVERYTHING FELT RIGHT.
FLAME ON!

WHEN THE PARADISE WE'D WORKED FOR CAME TOGETHER.
EEEEEE
WOW!
YES. I HAVE BOILED A KETTLE, DANI. I ONCE BURNED SO HOT I MELTED THROUGH GALACTUS, BUT NOW I--
WHAT'S GALACTUS?
YOU DON'T KNOW WHO GALACTUS IS?
IT'S A TEA PARTY FOR KIDS AND THEIR CLOSEST TOYS, JOHNNY. PLANETARY THREATS AREN'T INVITED.

I THINK IT'S AWESOME THAT YOU CAN BOIL A KETTLE SO FAST, UNCLE JOHNNY.
THANK YOU, MAY.
TEA?
SURE.
STUFFED ELEPHANT?
WHY NOT.
JESS! GOOD TIMING.
DANI, WOULD YOU LIKE TO OFFER YOUR MOTHER A CUP OF TEA?
WHAT'S HAPPENED?

The Alchemist's Cave.
TONY DIDN'T COME HOME LAST NIGHT.
STEVE ROGERS SHOWED UP. THEY WENT FOR A WALK. THEY NEVER CAME BACK.
CAPTAIN AMERICA WASN'T HERE.
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT, GABBY?
CAPTAIN AMERICA SMELLS LIKE A STURDY OAK TABLE AND DUTY.
SOMEONE ELSE WAS HERE.
SNF
YES. I KNOW THAT SCENT.
MYSTIQUE.

COME ON.

WE DEALT WITH A NIGHT HORDE ATTACK ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE CITY LAST NIGHT.
IT COULD HAVE BEEN A DELIBERATE DIVERSION.

TONY FELL HERE. OR WAS KNOCKED DOWN.
HE BLED A LITTLE, BUT NOT TOO MUCH. MYSTIQUE WASN'T THE ONLY ONE WITH HIM.

NO. AND STARK PUT UP A FIGHT. A LOT OF VAMPIRES DIED.
SNF

PEPPER. I'M SORRY. I KNOW WHO WAS HERE.
I KNOW WHO TOOK TONY.

IF APOCALYPSE HAS TAKEN STARK, WE NEED TO RECOVER HIM. IMMEDIATELY.
I'M SURPRISED TO HEAR THAT YOU CARE, DOOM.
HE DOESN'T, JOHNNY. HE JUST SEES THE THREAT.
STARK IS THE GREATEST WEAPONS MAKER WHO HAS EVER LIVED.
TONY IS FAR MORE THAN THAT, LUNELLA.
DON'T DELUDE YOURSELF. HIS MIND IS BUILT FOR DESTRUCTION.
T'CHALLA. THE PARADISE YOU'RE TRYING TO CREATE HERE WILL GO UP IN FLAMES.

WE NEED TO RETRIEVE HIM.
IN THE HANDS OF APOCALYPSE, STARK IS A TICKING TIME BOMB.
I WILL GO. I WILL GET HIM BACK.
TICK. TICK.
I'LL GO WITH YOU, PEPPER.
SO WILL I.
TICK. TICK.
PEPPER. WE DON'T KNOW IF HE'S ALIVE.
EVEN IF HE IS, WE DON'T KNOW WHERE HE'S BEING HELD.
TICK. TICK.
TICK. T--
COULD YOU *STOP TICKING?* I GET YOU'RE DOING IT FOR DRAMATIC EFFECT, BUT THIS IS ALL DRAMATIC ENOUGH ALREADY.
WE HAVE SPENT YEARS AVOIDING CONFLICT WITH APOCALYPSE AND HIS FORCES. WE CAN'T RUSH INTO THIS.
WE DO HAVE *SOMEONE* WHO CAN RUSH INTO THIS.

SO THE BLACK PANTHER SENT A SCOUT.
THE IDEA WAS THAT QUICKSILVER WOULD BE IN AND OUT OF THE BASE BEFORE ANYONE EVER KNEW HE WAS THERE. FASTER THAN EVEN APOCALYPSE COULD DETECT HIM.
AND HE COULD HAVE DONE JUST THAT...
WHAT?
...IF IT WASN'T FOR WHAT HE DISCOVERED.
FATHER.

PIETRO.
NO!

HNNG.
THO
YOUR DEFENSES WORKED WELL, OCTAVIUS.
THANK YOU, APOCALYPSE.
SHOULD WE LOCK HIM AWAY WITH *THE OTHERS?*
NO...

"...LET'S SEND HIM BACK."
WE DIDN'T KNOW WHAT WE WERE DEALING WITH.
T'CHALLA.
QUICKSILVER.
WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED?
PIETRO?

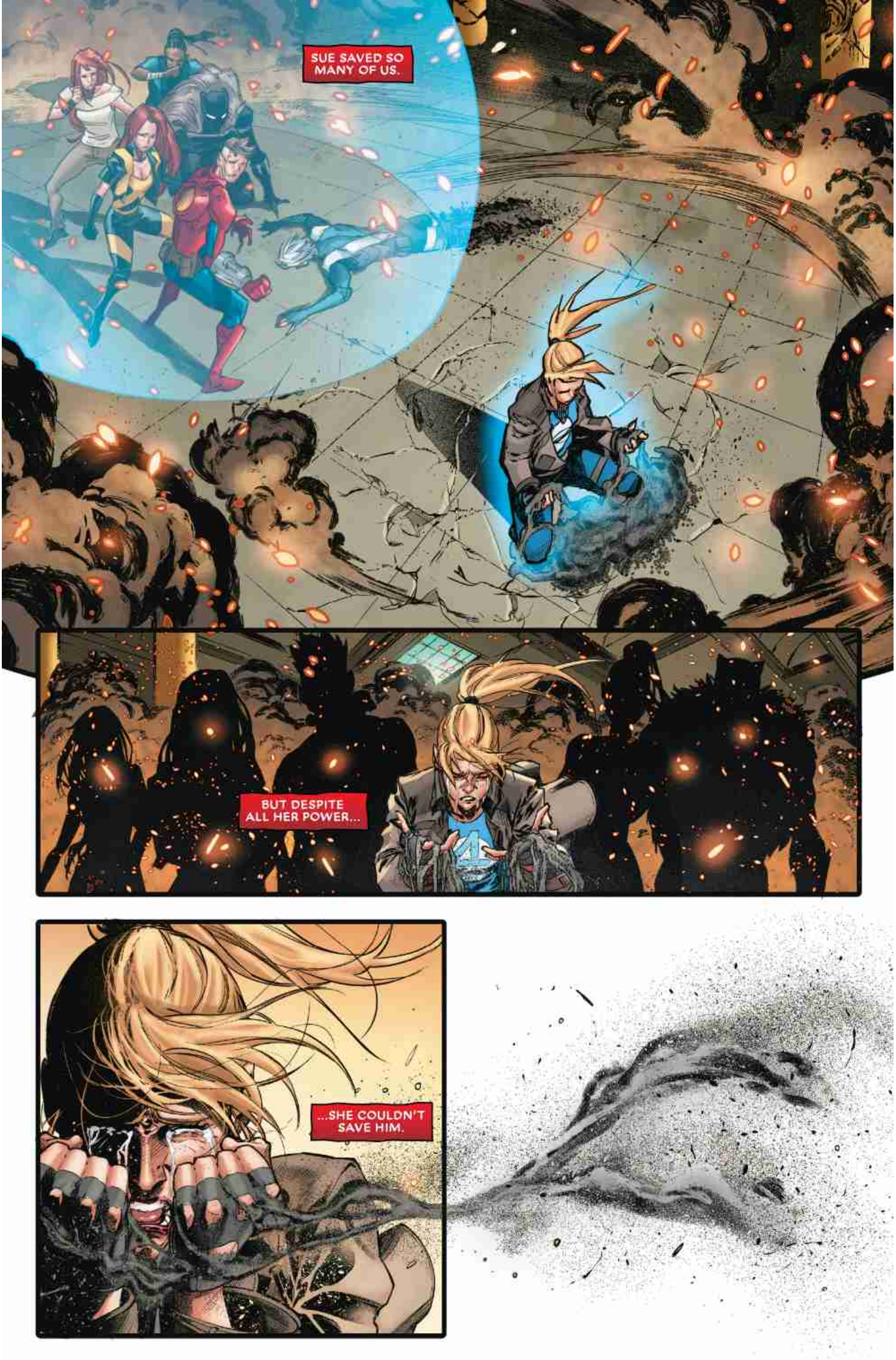
WE DIDN'T KNOW *WHO* WE WERE DEALING WITH.
SOMETHING ISN'T RIGHT.
HIS MIND...
SOMETHING IS IN HIS *MIND.*
LOOK OUT!

CRK
HE WAS TOO FAST.
I COULDN'T STOP IT.
FLAME O--

IT ALL HAPPENED SO FAST.
JOHNNY!
SUE...

IT ONLY TOOK JEAN GREY A SECOND TO REACH QUICKSILVER'S MIND.
SLEEP!
TO SHUT HIM DOWN.
THD
JOHNNY!
BUT SO MUCH DAMAGE HAD ALREADY BEEN DONE--DAMAGE WE COULDN'T REVERSE.

SUE. I... I CAN'T CONTROL IT.
YOU HAVE TO GET AWAY. RUN.
NO. I'M NOT GOING ANYWHERE.
I'M NOT LEAVING YOU.
AND MY FRIEND...
...JOHNNY STORM BURNED AWAY.

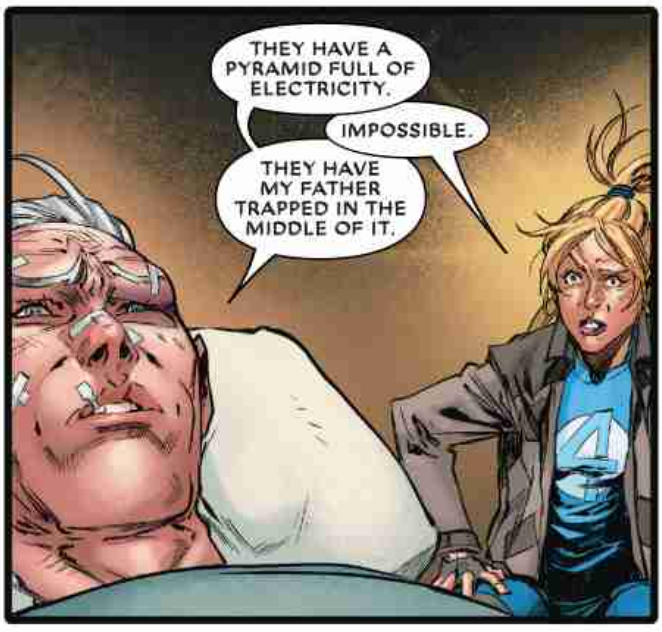

SUE SAVED SO MANY OF US.
BUT DESPITE ALL HER POWER...
...SHE COULDN'T SAVE HIM.

I...I KNEW WHAT I WAS DOING.
I COULD SEE IT ALL. BUT THE PURPLE MAN... I COULDN'T...

SUE... I'M SO SORRY.

IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT.
IT'S WHAT KILLGRAVE DOES. I KNOW WHAT IT'S LIKE TO HAVE THAT &$%& IN YOUR HEAD.
NONE OF THIS IS YOUR FAULT, PIETRO.

WHAT DID YOU SEE?


THEY HAVE A PYRAMID FULL OF ELECTRICITY.
IMPOSSIBLE.
THEY HAVE MY FATHER TRAPPED IN THE MIDDLE OF IT.

MAGNETO.
IF I WAS TRYING TO BUILD A FARADAY CAGE AGAINST THE E.M.P.--AND I WAS AN ACTUAL MONSTER--THAT'S HOW I'D DO IT.

DID YOU SEE STARK?
I DID. THEY WERE WORKING ON SOMETHING. AND NOT JUST TONY. HANK McCOY, DOCTOR OCTAVIUS, RIRI WILLIAMS, REED RICHARDS--

WHAT?
AND THAT WAS THE INFORMATION THAT CEMENTED WHAT CAME NEXT.
REED RICHARDS AND HIS SON, FRANKLIN, HAD BEEN MISSING AND PRESUMED DEAD, FOR FOUR YEARS.

REED WAS THERE. HE'S WORKING FOR APOCALYPSE.
SUE STORM WAS GRIEVING. SHE'D WATCHED, HELPLESSLY AS HER BROTHER DIED. THEN, SUDDENLY, SHE WAS GIVEN HOPE HER HUSBAND AND CHILD COULD STILL BE ALIVE.

SUE. SUE!
OUR STRIKE FORCE WOULD BE READY TO INVADE EUROPE THE VERY NEXT MORNING.

SOME OF US WOULD NEVER RETURN.
THEY'LL BE COMING.
THEY'LL TRY TO STOP US.
THEY WILL NOT SUCCEED.
ARE THE THREE OF YOU READY?
YES. WE ARE READY TO *HUNT*.
To Be Continued!

HERE'S A SPECIAL LOOK AT IBAN COELLO'S DESIGN FOR DOCTOR DOOM IN DARK AGES

DOCTOR DOOM

NEXT

The Earth has been plunged into darkness, and Avengers and X-Men have begun vanishing in the night. They have been taken and twisted by Apocalypse to serve an evil older than the world. A group of heroes will assemble to cross the dark planet in a desperate attempt to rescue their friends and save a civilization already on its knees.

ZONE